

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as indicated in the claim listing that follows. The following claim listing will replace all prior claim listings.

1. (*Canceled*)

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2. (*Canceled*)

3. (*Currently Amended*) The flocculant mentioned in Claim [[2]] 17 wherein the ~~above-mentioned~~ alkaline substance is calcium carbonate or lime.

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4. (*Previously Amended*) The flocculant mentioned in Claim 3 wherein said acid solvent is diluted hydrochloric acid.

5. (*Currently Amended*) The flocculant mentioned in Claim 4, wherein
15 said acid solvent contains one, two, or more gelation ~~suppressant~~ suppressants selected from ~~an~~ acetic acid, ammonium acetate, and ammonium chloride ~~group~~.

6. (*Previously Presented*) The flocculant mentioned in Claim 5, wherein said silicon-containing substance contains iron or aluminum.

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7. (*Currently Amended*) The flocculant mentioned in Claim 6, ~~wherein~~
the having a pH value is of 2 to 3.

8. (*Currently Amended*) A manufacturing method for a flocculant made

from a silicon-containing substance ~~generation means for mixing comprising the~~
~~steps of: combining~~ a silicon-containing substance and an alkaline substance; ~~and~~
heat treating the ~~result~~ resulting combination at a temperature lower than the
melting temperature of said silicon-containing substance to generate an acid
5 soluble silicon-containing substance; ~~[[,]]~~ combining the acid soluble silicon-
containing substance with an acid solvent to obtain an acid solvent ~~generation~~
~~means for generating a solvent made from an acid solution, and a silicon colloidal~~
~~solution~~ ~~generation means for dissolving said acid solvent in said silicon-~~
~~containing substance to generate a~~ acid silicon colloidal solution that is a
10 flocculant.

9. *(Original)* The manufacturing method for a flocculant mentioned in
Claim 8 wherein said alkaline substance is made from calcium carbonate or lime.

15 10. *(Currently Amended)* The manufacturing method for a flocculant
mentioned in Claim 9, wherein said acid solvent ~~generation means~~ comprises a
~~means for diluting~~ diluted hydrochloric acid ~~to generate an acid solvent~~.

20 11. *(Previously Presented)* The manufacturing method for a flocculant
mentioned in Claim 10, wherein said acid solvent generation means includes
means for mixing one, two, or more gelation suppressants selected from said an
acetic acid, ammonium acetate, and ammonium chloride with said acid solution.

25 12. *(Currently Amended)* The manufacturing method for a flocculant
mentioned in Claim 11, further comprising the step of passing the acid silicon

colloidal solution through a filter ~~wherein a filtering means is added~~ for filtering said silicon colloidal solution to remove undissolved suspended matter.

13. (*Previously Presented*) The manufacturing method for a flocculant
5 mentioned in Claim 12, wherein an aggregating means is added for adding
gypsum to said silicon colloidal solution to cause undissolved suspended matter
to aggregate.

14. (*Previously Presented*) The manufacturing method for a flocculant
10 mentioned in Claim 13, wherein a pH adjustment means is added to add iron or
aluminum to said silicon colloidal solution to adjust the pH value of said silicon
colloidal solution.

15. (*Previously Presented*) A flocculation method for mixing the
15 flocculant mentioned in Claim 7 with a suspension to flocculate suspended
matter.

16. (*Original*) The flocculation method mentioned in Claim 15, wherein
a means is added for further mixing an alkaline substance in a suspension.

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17. (*New*) A flocculant for flocculating suspended matter, the flocculant obtainable by dilution of a silicon collodial solution, wherein the flocculant is obtained by:

- 5 mixing a silicon-containing substance with an alkaline substance, heating the resulting mixture at a temperature below the melting point of the silicon-containing substance, whereby the silicon-containing substance is rendered acid soluble, and
- 10 dissolving the so-heat-treated silicon-containing substance in an acid solvent to obtain the flocculant.